



2019 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



Our Mission

To provide high quality, comprehensive early care and education for ALL children.

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Photos by Melani Tutt

Dear friends and supporters:

Your support of Early Connections Learning Centers in 2019 made a significant impact in the lives of hundreds of children and families in Colorado Springs – thank you! Without you, families in our community would not have access to early education that is affordable, high quality and supports children during a time in their lives of critical brain development. Your support allows children to experience early education and sets the stage for success in school and life.

I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on a few things your support made possible in 2019. First, I am pleased to report that all of our full-day centers earned their National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) re-accreditation in 2019. This voluntary accreditation, which is earned by less than 10% of all early education organizations in the country, is a high mark of approval for our teachers and staff and reflects the high standards to which we hold ourselves. Further, the scores earned by our centers were well above a "passing grade," in fact, in several areas, our staff earned perfect scores!

We created an internal education program to provide Teacher Assistants the opportunity to earn their Child Development Associate Credential, cultivating them into Teacher-qualified staff over time. In its first year, we had 10 participants in the program. We have further provided additional supports to teachers through the continued embedding of the Pyramid Plus Approach in all of our classrooms, which offers behavioral health supports and strategies to teachers.

You may have noticed scaffolding along the west side of the Historic Day Nursery in 2019. This is related to the second phase of the Window Rehabilitation Project, funded by the State Historical Fund, El Pomar Foundation and individual donors. This phase will wrap up in 2020 and will result in the windows, doors and wood trim on the east façade of the Day Nursery being repaired and restored. Work will continue in phases with anticipated completion in 2023.

Finally, in 2019 we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Gingerbread & Jazz, our signature fundraising event by moving the event to The Broadmoor, which resulted in the most successful Gingerbread & Jazz ever! Thank you to all who joined us in support of our community's children.

Please join me in sharing the story of Early Connections with others. Your continued support of our community's children impacts not only their lives, but those of our entire community.

Thank you,

Mary Beth Williams

Mary Beth Williams
2019 Board Chair
Supporter since 2009



"I don't know what I would have done without Early Connections. We enrolled our son when he was placed with us through the foster care system and hoped it would improve his social, physical and cognitive deficits caused by years of severe neglect. After being with Early Connections we have found it to be the perfect fit and the staff have become an extension of our family. He has improved beyond what we ever thought was possible and is now excelling in kindergarten! We are so grateful for the support Early Connections provided as we were new foster parents and now, new adoptive parents to our little guy."

-Sarah



98%

of families receive
tuition assistance

64%

of children are in a
single parent family

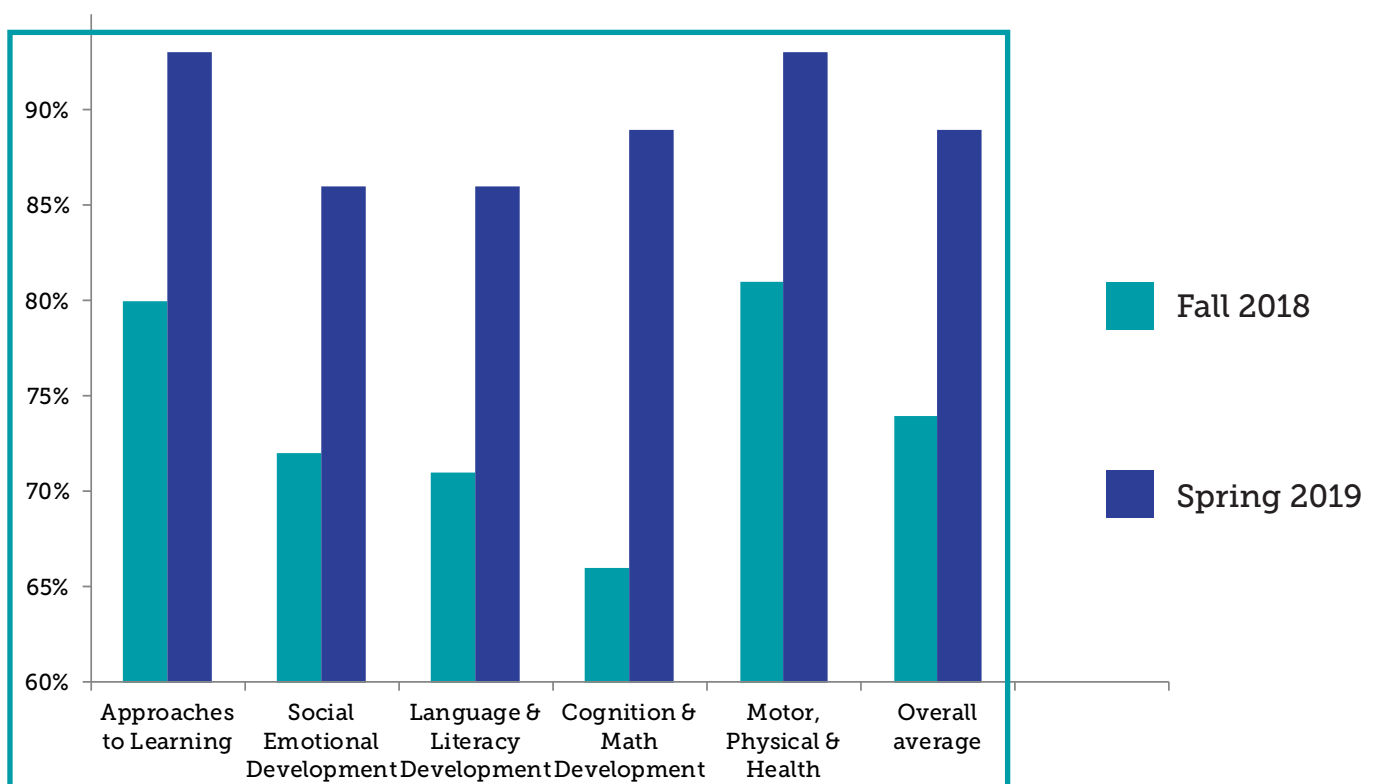
Early Care & Education



Curriculum and Assessment

Children are evaluated utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD, a Colorado Department of Education approved school readiness assessment, which measures the knowledge, skills and behaviors in all developmental domains that are most predictive of school success. In 2019, our children meeting or exceeding developmental benchmarks skyrocketed from 74% to 89%, with 100% of children showing improvement.

Children Meeting or Exceeding Widely-Held Expectations



Health

Our comprehensive health program addresses the needs of the whole child. From teaching them how to brush their teeth to intensive training and coaching for our teachers to support the behavioral and mental health of our children, we ensure that all of a child's health needs are met. Thanks to your support, we have increased the number of Behavioral Health Specialists on staff and deeply embedded social and emotional supports into our classrooms. Providing children with preventative mental health support while their brains are still developing is crucial to school and lifelong success.

58%

of Early Connections' families are eligible for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.

To qualify a family of two must have an income of **LESS THAN \$602/WEEK.**



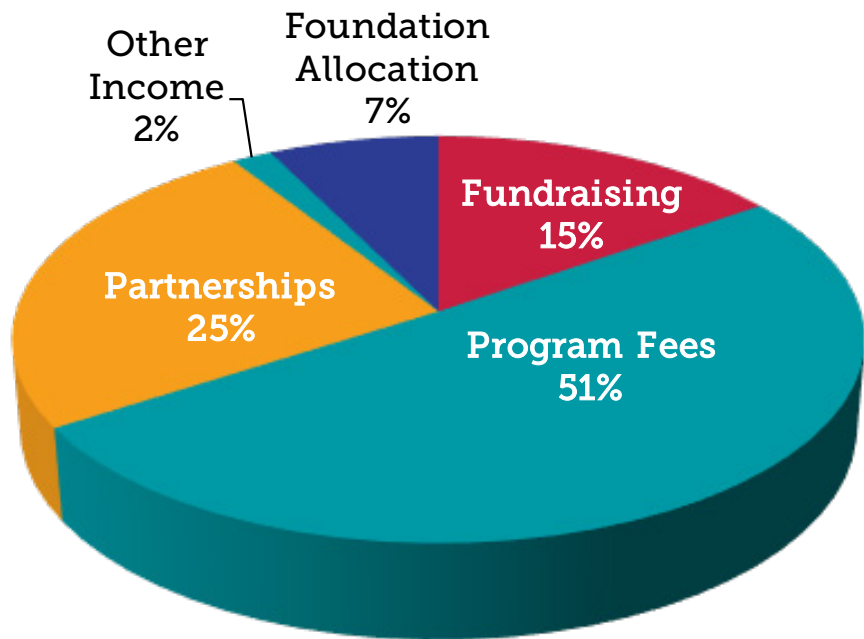
Family Engagement & Support

We believe families are a child's first and best teacher as families play a critical role in preparing their children for success in school and life. Home visits and conferences enable teachers to learn more about each child, share information regarding progress and to set goals with the parents for the child. We also offer parenting classes, teaching families how to support their child with the same strategies used in the classroom, providing continuity of care.

Home Network of the Pikes Peak Region

We continued our work to build quality early education options for families in local Family Child Care Homes in 2019. Of the 52 home businesses we worked with, 18 of them earned high ratings for quality in the State's rating system, including four who received the highest possible rating.

FINANCIALS



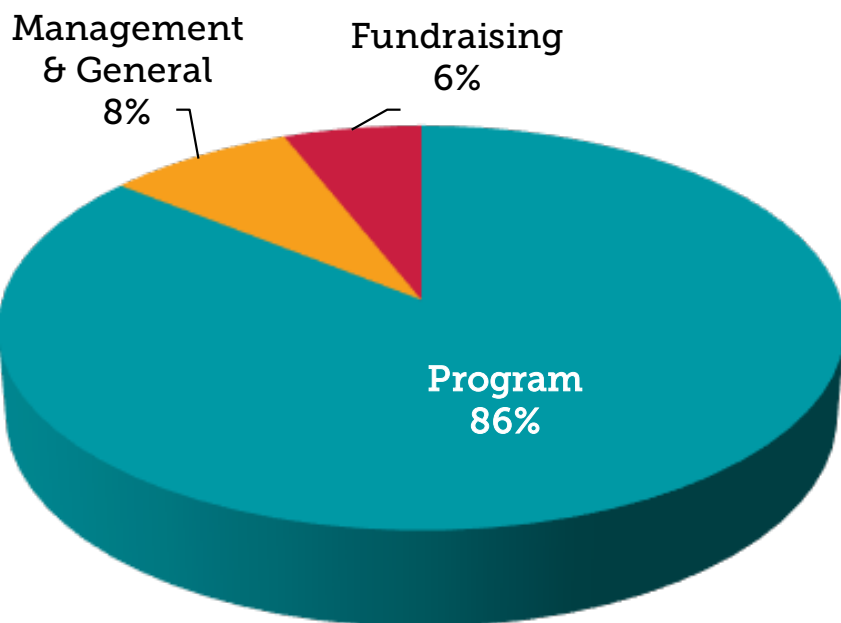
2019 Income*

Fundraising	\$	808,381
Program Fees	\$	2,661,170
Partnerships	\$	1,315,476
Other Income	\$	91,081
Foundation Allocation	\$	388,596
	\$	<u>5,264,704</u>

2019 Expenses*

Program	\$	4,617,007
Management & General	\$	441,864
Fundraising	\$	324,321
	\$	<u>5,383,192</u>

* UNAUDITED



Partnerships



WHY I GIVE

"Early Connections Learning Centers provides children the opportunity to dream and develop their minds and social skills so that they may become a thriving member of society. Who knows? One of these children could create a solution to a challenge that directly



impacts one of us. As a latchkey kid who was almost taken away from his family, I know the importance of organizations like Early Connections Learning Centers. The organization provides children with a safe place to play and learn. These foundational skills give these children and their families an opportunity to thrive in our community and I am proud to support them."

-Robert Gonzales
Supporter since 2015



Over 500 hours
of professional
development
offered for
our staff.



Current Locations

Antlers Place
Ages 18 months to 6 years

South Chelton
Ages 6 weeks to 6 years

Day Nursery
Ages 2 1/2 to 13 years

Sand Creek
Ages 5 to 12 years

For complete donor list, visit earlyconnections.org



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earlyconnections.org